

President Clinton who wins reelection, I can almost guarantee that the first thing he will do will call for the creation of a blue ribbon commission to resolve the Medicare crisis. It is an issue that should be debated this year. It should have been resolved this year, but it will not be.

I take hope, Mr. President, when I look at leaders such as TOM DASCHLE and TRENT LOTT. I know, again, what the reaction was when Senator Mitchell, my colleague from Maine—again, I point out he was one of the most effective majority leaders in the history of this body—when he left, there was a great expression of woe. “What will we do?” When our distinguished colleague, Bob Dole, left, all of us felt the pang and the anxiety of saying, “What are we going to do now?” Bob Dole is no longer with us—a master at bringing people together.

I believe that we are still in good hands. I am impressed with the majority leader, with his drive, intelligence, and determination and, yes, his pragmatism, his willingness on key issues to reach across the aisle, and to say, “Can’t we work this out? We have our differences, but can’t we at least come to some kind of consensus on the major issues confronting this country?” I am enormously impressed with his talents, and those of Senator DASCHLE as well, both men of outstanding ability and good will.

To those people who declare that “the center can no longer hold; things are going to fall apart; the best are lacking in conviction while the worst are full of passion and intensity,” I say nonsense. There are going to be people who will come to this Chamber who will be filled with passion, to be sure, who will argue strenuously for their positions. But I believe it is inevitable that they will come back to the center.

The center may have shifted slightly to the right. People are more conservative today than they were 10 or 20 years ago. But the center has to hold. If the center does not hold, then you will have stagnation. If the center does not hold, then you will have paralysis. If the center does not hold, you will have Government shutdowns. When that takes place, the level of cynicism that currently exists will only deepen to a point that is so dangerous that it will afflict us for generations to come.

Mr. President, Alistair Cooke summed it up for me in his wonderful book called “America.” In one of his chapters, he made the inevitable comparison between the United States and Rome. He said that we, like Rome, were in danger of losing that which we profess to cherish most. He said liberty is the luxury of self-discipline; that those nations who have historically failed to discipline themselves have had discipline imposed upon them by others. He said America is a country in which I see the most persistent idealism and the greatest cynicism, and the race is on between its vitality and its decadence. He said we have—paraphras-

ing Franklin—a great country, and we can keep it, but only if we care to keep it.

I believe based upon the many friends that I have made here—the people that I admire and who are leaving with me, but those, more importantly, who are staying and those who will come—that there is a genuine desire to keep this the greatest country on the face of the Earth, a country that is still a beacon of hope and idealism throughout a world that is filled with so much oppression and darkness, and this will remain the greatest living institution in all of the world.

Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. GORTON). The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. LAUTENBERG. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

SENATOR BILL BRADLEY

Mr. LAUTENBERG. Mr. President, I rise to pay tribute to my friend, colleague, and the senior Senator from New Jersey, BILL BRADLEY, as he leaves the U.S. Senate. I have served with BILL BRADLEY for nearly 14 years, my entire tenure in this body, and it is difficult to imagine what it will be like without him. Although we have different styles, rhythms, and backgrounds, we formed an effective team which fought together for our State’s and our Nation’s interests.

Throughout his life, BILL BRADLEY has achieved remarkable success as a scholar, an athlete, an author and an outstanding public official. And whether he was helping his team to championships at Princeton University, the Olympic arena, or the floor of Madison Square Garden, or helping to pass landmark legislation on the floor of the Senate, BILL BRADLEY always strives for the best. He has performed always as a rising star, and I know that this is not his apex.

Mr. President, in the Senate, BILL BRADLEY concentrated on a few areas and helped to translate his own vision into public policy. As a member of the Finance Committee, he continually fought for fair tax policy, honest budgeting, and economic policies that enhance growth. He is widely known as the author of the fair tax, which was the foundation of the Tax Reform Act of 1986.

BILL also knew that the single best economic advantage is a good education. So he designed a new way to help pay for college. His self-reliance loans give all students, regardless of income, the chance to borrow money from the Federal Government.

He has been a strong voice against gun violence and crime in our communities and a creative thinker in developing opportunities for urban youth.

His efforts are reflected in the enactment of community banking and urban enterprise zone legislation, educational reforms and community policing programs.

But what many of us will remember most is BILL’s passion when it comes to issues involving equality. BILL established himself as a serious and badly needed voice in the national dialog on racism, pluralism, and discrimination. He has challenged every American to confront the festering sore of racism. In his keynote at the 1992 Democratic convention, he warned that “We will advance together, or each of us will be diminished.”

One of his most powerful moments in the Senate, and one which I will never forget, was his denunciation of the horrifying beating of Rodney King. I will always remember BILL standing at his podium, pounding it 56 times with a bunch of pencils. His blows were meant to represent the beating administered by the police to Rodney King. The sound, resonating through the Senate Chamber, was a powerful reminder of just how far we need to go on the road to equality.

In the international arena, BILL BRADLEY was so energetic and committed that he traveled to the former Soviet Union for a weekend—to try to facilitate understanding between the superpowers, and to foster peaceful co-existence through economic cooperation.

With all of his achievements, BILL’s chief goal in the Senate was to further the interests of New Jersey. He has written that he once received a special gift, a collection of every variety of rock found in our Garden State. I, too, think that it is the perfect gift, because what could better symbolize a man whose commitment to New Jersey’s interests and her people was always rock solid?

His hard-working schedule would, on occasion, take BILL to New Jersey twice in a single day, in order to fulfill his obligations to meet with constituents, to help solve a problem, to deliver a talk to students, or to simply stay on top of the Garden State’s needs. And his famous New Jersey beach walks, which he took during every one of the past 18 years, are symbolic of BILL’s constant presence and consistent commitment to our State.

BILL has written that he prefers moving to standing still, well I know that wherever his journey takes him, his ultimate destination will be success, and all of us will benefit from his efforts. To my friend, colleague, and fellow New Jerseyan, I thank you for the contributions you have made, and for those yet to come. I offer my wish for continued success and happiness.

Mr. HEFLIN addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Alabama.

REVISION AND EXTENSION OF REMARKS

Mr. HEFLIN. Mr. President, on Wednesday, September 25, 1996, notice

appeared in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD that a final issue of the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD for the 104th Congress will be published on October 21, 1996, in order to permit Members to revise and extend their remarks. And then that there will be a publication of the RECORD, and that it would be available I believe on October 23. The material is to be submitted to the Office of Official Reporters of Debate at various times but up until 3 p.m. on October 21.

I ask unanimous consent that I be allowed permission to revise and extend remarks in connection with the space program, national security, trade, civil rights, crime, agriculture, drugs, foreign policy, domestic policy, and other related subjects including research and development matters relating to my State.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. HEFLIN. I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. KYL). The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. DASCHLE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

FAREWELL TO "THE JUDGE"

Mr. DASCHLE. Mr. President, the time has come that, I daresay, every Member in this Chamber, Republican as well as Democrat, hoped would never come. With the end of the 104th Congress, we must say goodbye to "The Judge"—Senator HOWELL HEFLIN.

Since he was first elected to the Senate in 1978, the senior Senator from Alabama has always shown himself to be a southern gentleman of the first order. His word is his bond; his integrity and dedication to public service is without question; and his love of country and devotion for the U.S. Senate is apparent to all who know him.

During his 18 years in the Senate, Senator HEFLIN has been respectfully called the "spokesman for Southern agriculture" for his efforts to improve the life and work of America's farmers and to preserve his State's valuable agricultural heritage.

He is also commonly and warmly referred to as "The Judge," not only for his years of service as the chief justice of the Alabama Supreme Court, but for his efforts in State court reform, his extraordinary leadership in fighting crime and drug abuse, and his service on both the Senate Judiciary and Ethics Committees. Dozens of times I have observed my colleagues seek his advice on how to vote on legal issues.

Mr. President, I would like to add another characterization of "The Judge"—I think of Senator HEFLIN as "Mr. Alabama." No Senator has more cherished or more ably represented his or her State than the senior senator from Alabama. He has magnificently

and skillfully combined the national interest with the interest of his State through his support of Federal agricultural programs, America's space program, and the maintenance of a first-rate defense. Only in 1 year during his 18 years in the Senate did he fail to visit each of the 67 counties in his State in order to do what he says he likes best—"talk to the home folks."

The people of Alabama, obviously, appreciated his work and his service. Never once did he poll less than 61 percent of the vote in any election.

I will always remember "The Judge." I will always remember him as a "public servant who served with dignity, integrity and diligence, worthy of the confidence and trust that Alabamians placed" in him.

And I miss him. I will miss his folksy, southern humor. His stories of "Sockless Sam." His depictions of friends and foes alike—in his 1990 campaign, he did not run against a mere Republican, he ran against a "Gucci-shoed, Mercedes-driving, Jacuzzi-soaking, Perrier-drinking, Grey Poupon Republican."

Now the time has come. I say thank you and congratulations to Senator HEFLIN on a remarkable career in the Senate. I wish him all the best, and to his wonderful wife, "Mike," as they embark on the next phase of their lives—their return to Tusculum, which, "Mr. Alabama" has called "a wonderful little town to be from and best little town in America to go him to."

I yield the floor and suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. MURKOWSKI. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. DEWINE). Without objection, it is so ordered.

UNANIMOUS-CONSENT REQUEST— H.R. 1296

Mr. MURKOWSKI. Mr. President, on behalf of the leader, I ask unanimous consent, after consultation with the distinguished Democratic leader, that we may turn to the consideration of the conference report to accompany the Presidio bill, and when the Senate turns to the consideration of the conference report, at this time, the reading be dispensed with.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Mr. DASCHLE. On behalf of a number of my colleagues, I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

Mr. MURKOWSKI. Mr. President, I obviously regret hearing the objection from the other side to dispense with the reading of the Presidio conference report. I am informed by the clerk that this would take awhile. It has been es-

timated at some 10 hours or thereabouts. Needless to say, the Senate has many very important pieces of legislation that we must enact prior to the end of the fiscal year.

This objection is an obvious indication that Members on the other side of the aisle do not intend or do not want to have this significant parks bill have consideration before this body. The objectors have been informed, it is my understanding, if they were to let the Senate turn to the conference report, that I, as leader, was to immediately ask unanimous consent that the conference report be recommitted back to the conference committee in order that the conferees could address several issues raised by the President. Consequently, since the objection was raised, that conference committee unfortunately will be unable to meet and address these concerns.

So, obviously, the will of the Members will not have been addressed, they will not have an opportunity to proceed with that. I regret that the Senate Democrats feel a need to block the Senate from enacting this massive omnibus parks bill, the single largest environmental package we have had before us that affects 41 States and includes 126 separate parks and public land matters.

Each Member will continue to work with the Democratic leader. Speaking for the leadership, Senator LOTT has indicated he will continue to work with the Democratic Members who have objections, but time is running out. So I urge all Members to rethink this objection, allow the conferees to address this very important issue.

Further, Mr. President, we are prepared—the Republicans are prepared; as chairman of the Energy and Natural Resources Committee, I am prepared; our conferees are prepared—to recommit this bill to conference. We can fix the provision which the leader referred to in his statement which causes that small problem in the House.

What it was, was a small tax-related problem. As you know, most all tax issues must originate in the House, so we have taken that out. We have the report here, Mr. President, ready to go, 700 pages, the result of 2 years of work, 126 separate sections are in here, 41 States are represented in here.

We have heard from the administration, but they objected to the Utah wilderness. Utah wilderness was not included. They went ahead and initiated an action under the Antiquities Act. That is another story for another time.

Grazing was a major issue, more objection from the administration. Grazing is not in here. The Tongass issue in my State to extend a contract for 15 years so we could build a new pulp mill and save 4,000 jobs, 1,000 directly in the pulp mill by extending the contract. That mill will never be built. The existing mill will be shut down. We will lose our jobs. I do not know what those people will do. That was taken out.

Up in Minnesota, the Minnesota wilderness lakes bill was objected to by